

REMARKS

The undersigned Attorney for the Assignee has attempted to contact the Examiner regarding the Office Action rejection mailed September 24, 2004. However, the Examiner has not returned the Attorney's telephone call. The Assignee believes the Office Action is unclear as to the elements allegedly disclosed by each of the cited references. The Examiner is invited to clarify which specific elements of the claimed invention are disclosed by each of the cited references.

In any event, the Assignee presents the enclosed remarks in response to the Office Action mailed September 24, 2004. Claims 1, 3, 5, 7, 9, and 11 remain pending; while Claims 2, 4, 6, 8, 10, and 12 were withdrawn by the prior response filed April 30, 2004, without prejudice to filing continuation or divisional applications. Claims 7, 9, and 11 have been amended by the present response. The undersigned Attorney for the Assignee respectfully requests reexamination and reconsideration of the application and claims.

A. THE REJECTION UNDER 35 U.S.C. § 103

The Office Action rejected Claims 1, 3, 5, 7, 9, and 11 under 35 U.S.C. § 103, as being unpatentable for obviousness in view of *Hasegawa*, JP Patent No. 09117567 (hereinafter “*Hasegawa*”) in view of *Steiber et al.* (US Patent Application Publication 2002/0111157) (hereinafter “*Steiber*”). Please kindly re-examine and reconsider the application in view of the appended remarks.

1. *Independent Claim 1*

Hasegawa relates to a keeping device for coins for a game center, but, as the Office Action admits, does not disclose a “network interface connecting the medal keeping and paying server apparatus and the plurality of medal keeping and paying client apparatus.” Office Action, p. 3. Even though the Office Action relies on *Steiber* to teach a networked cash management system, the *Steiber* system relates to a centralized system control unit (12) that lacks any client-type functionality. The *Steiber* centralized system control unit (12) provides commands for controlling operation of cash handling devices (13, 14, 15, 16, 17) in a central host computer / client arrangement. See Abstract, and Fig. 1. In contrast, Applicant’s claim 1 includes an element describing client apparatus with client-type functionality (“the processing section of the plurality of the medal keeping and paying client apparatus is enabled to input at least the count information of the medal keeping means and the right person authorization information in each of the plurality of the medal keeping and paying client apparatus to the operation information storing means of the medal keeping and paying server apparatus through the network interface to store and renew the information, and is enabled to access the operation information storing means through the network interface to output the payment signal based on the count information of at least one medal stored in the operation information storing means”), and further includes an element describing server apparatus with additional client-type functionality (“the processing section of the server medal keeping and paying apparatus is also enabled to input at least the count information of at least the medal keeping means and right person authorization information in the medal keeping and paying

server apparatus to the operation information storing means of the medal keeping and paying server apparatus through the network interface to store and renew the information, and the processing section is enabled to access the operation information storing means through the network interface to output the payment signal based on the count information of the at least one medal stored in the operation information storing means.”) (underlining supplied). Thus the claimed invention includes client apparatus and server apparatus with client-type functionality. Since the centralized system control unit (12) of *Steiber* relates to a centralized server, the *Steiber* centralized system control unit lacks client-type functionality and *Steiber* cannot disclose all of the elements of claim 1.

Furthermore, Assignee believes that both of the claim 1 elements described above are neither disclosed or suggested by the cited references. Since these elements are missing from the cited references, then each and every element of claim 1 is neither disclosed nor suggested by the combination of *Hasegawa* and *Steiber*. The Assignee believes the Office Action is unclear as to whether at least the above two elements are allegedly disclosed by each of the cited references. The Examiner is invited to clarify where in *Hasegawa* and/or *Steiber* these specific elements of the claimed invention are disclosed.

Therefore, for the reasons presented above, claim 1 is believed to be patentable over at least the cited references.

2. *Dependent Claims 3, 5, 7, 9, and 11*

Claims 7, 9, and 11 were objected to by the Office Action, and have been amended by omitting the “s” in the term “claims.” Claims 3, 5, 7, 9, and 11 were rejected as obvious due

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to their dependency from a rejected base independent claim. Since these claims are dependent from independent claim 1, for which reasons of patentability have been presented above, then these claims should also be patentable over the cited references, and should now be in condition for allowance.

II. Amendments to the Specification

The Abstract has been amended in accordance with the Office Action recommendations. The amended Abstract is believed to be within the 50 to 150 word count, and no new matter has been added.

CONCLUSION

Claims 1, 3, 5, 7, 9, and 11 remain pending, and are believed to be patentable over the cited references. Should the Examiner believe that anything further is necessary in order to place the application in better condition for allowance, the Examiner is respectfully requested to contact the undersigned attorney at the telephone number listed below. No additional fees are believed due; however, the Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any deficiency, or credit any overpayment, to Deposit Account No. 11-0855.

Respectfully submitted,


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Date: **22 December 2004**

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Attorney Docket No.: 45762/264216